Preview of the 24-hour race at the Nürburgring: Volkswagen is celebrating a Golf GTI Festival this year

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On the racetrack: Volkswagen will be represented by two enhanced Golf GTI Clubsport 24h, powered by alternative fuel

- In the spotlight: Volkswagen will present the anniversary model marking the Golf GTI's 50th birthday to the public

- Lap of honour: 40 sporty Volkswagen cars in front of 200,000 fans on the Nürburgring Nordschleife

A special GTI weekend is coming up soon: at the ADAC 24-hour race at the Nürburgring on Friday 20 June, Volkswagen will present the world premiere of the most powerful production Golf GTI ever built to date. Performance, appearance, equipment? Still secret. But it can already be revealed that the vehicle is a top-class anniversary model to mark the 50th birthday of the GTI next year, which Volkswagen is celebrating with this special car. This is just the start of what will be a weekend of racing tailor-made for Volkswagen fans: only one day later, two enhanced Golf GTI Clubsport 24h cars will take on the great challenge and compete in the 24-hour race on the circuit nicknamed 'Green Hell' in front of an expected 200,000 spectators.

Two fast GTIs, two strong teams: The Golf GTI Clubsport 24h with start number 19 will be driven by racing and Volkswagen test driver Benny Leuchter (D), seven-time rallycross world champion Johan Kristoffersson (S),Heiko Hammel (D) and Nico Otto (D). Jasmin Preisig (CH), Fabian Vettel (D), Timo Hochwind (D) and Christian Gebhardt (D) will compete in the second Golf GTI Clubsport 24h with start number 76. Both Golf GTI Clubsport 24 cars will be prepared and entered by Max Kruse Racing from Duisburg.

E20 for greater range and lower emissions: The two Golf GTI

Clubsport 24h cars will start in the AT3 class for vehicles with alternative fuels. The innovative Shell E20 bioethanol fuel, which was developed in cooperation with Volkswagen, will be used for the cars. The extremely knock-resistant mixture enables particularly efficient operation of the GTI engine. This not only significantly reduces CO2 emissions but also increases the range per tank fill.

Power up, drag coefficient down: The 397 PS (291 kW) and 265 km/h Golf GTI Clubsport 24h has been optimised in many details compared with last year. Benny Leuchter:

> A new regulation on vehicle classification has increased the starting weight of the Golf by 30 kilograms. We compensate for this by increasing the output by around 50 PS." In addition, the Volkswagen Team Max Kruse Racing has further improved aerodynamics and thus efficiency. Leuchter: "We have changed the flow of air onto the rear wing by moving the wing further to the rear. As a result, we generate less air resistance while the downforce stays the same.

Optimised weight distribution:

> At the same time, we have achieved better weight distribution through the use of lightweight components, among other things," adds Johan Kristoffersson. "In addition, the GTI's centre of gravity is lower, which increases performance." The focus was also on ensuring the highest possible reliability of all parts over the total distance. The cars also have lighter wheels from Protrac – their lower weight reduces the rotating masses, which in turn protects rotating and heavily loaded parts such as the wheel bearings. Leuchter adds: "Every little bit of additional durability increases the chance of getting through the 24 hours.

The track is the biggest opponent: The driver quartet of Leuchter, Kristoffersson, Hammel and Otto demonstrated the Golf GTI Clubsport 24h's incredible potential by securing first place in the AT3 class in 2024. Another class victory and a good position in the overall ranking are also the goals for 2025. But the 24-hour race on the Nordschleife is and remains a difficult and unpredictable challenge. Jasmin Preisig:

> The track is our biggest opponent because the weather conditions are often uncertain, accidents happen in front of you, or dirt or debris gets onto the tarmac. Conditions are constantly

changing. That’s why you also ultimately need luck to overcome the enormous distance without problems. I always say: if you reach the finish line after these long hours, you’ve already won.

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